

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussions, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-15 are currently pending in the application. No claims have been amended, canceled or added herewith. Figure 1 has been amended as requested to include the "telephone number converter", and that change is supported by the originally filed specification and does not introduce any new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, the drawings were objected to; and claims 1-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,141,341 (hereinafter "the '341 patent") to Jones et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,137,877 (hereinafter "the '877 patent") to Robin et al..

In response to the objection to the drawings, an amended Figure 1 is provided herewith which replaces the previous Figure 1. In the amended Figure 1, the call processor 120 has been amended to include a telephone number converter as claimed, e.g., in claim 1. Accordingly, this ground for objection should be withdrawn.

In response to the rejection of claims 1-15 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over the combination of the '341 patent and the '877 patent, Applicant respectfully traverses that rejection. The office action admits that the '341 patent does not disclose "the call processor further comprises a telephone number converter for converting the buffered series of digits from a first number, accessible by the first telephone line interface but not accessible via the second telephone line interface, to a second number, accessible via the first and second telephone line interfaces, such that the call processor directs the outgoing call to the second telephone line interface using the second number." Accordingly, the office action alleges that

the '877 patent cures the deficiency of the '341 patent by teaching this limitation. However, in fact the '877 patent also does not teach the same positively recited limitation admitted by the office action as not being present in the '341 patent.

The office action cites col. 11, line 24 to col. 13, line 55 of the '877 patent as teaching a "microprocessor capable of converting from a first number to a second number accessible by a local service provider or Internet service provider" but does not actually allege that the "telephone number converter" limitation of claim 1 is taught. Claim 1 recites "a telephone number converter for converting the buffered series of digits from a first number, accessible by the first telephone line interface but not accessible via the second telephone line interface, to a second number, accessible via the first and second telephone line interfaces, such that the call processor directs the outgoing call to the second telephone line interface using the second number." The office action has failed to even allege that the claimed relationship between the first number and the second number is met by the '877 patent.

The '877 patent describes processing numbers which are accessible by a first network into numbers which are accessible by a second network, albeit at a potentially lower rate. However, this is not what is claimed. The '877 patent does not disclose converting numbers which correspond to inaccessible numbers (e.g., 800 numbers on a VoIP network) to accessible ones. Col. 10, lines 34-39 of the '877 patent describe that 700, 800, 888 and 900 numbers are all part of exclusion lists. Particularly, that section states:

If the second through fourth numbers of the dialing sequence match any of the numbers on the exclusion list (or if the number sequence begins with a "10" or "*"), then the microprocessor 40 would cause the DTMF transmitter 50 to

dial the stored digits, or would simply let the originally dialed call proceed if it was dialed out to the access line in the first place.

Emphasis added.

Similarly, col. 12, lines 56-65, describes a second embodiment where the numbers which are inaccessible are again not converted. That section states:

For example, the telephone dialing device could preliminarily decide whether the telephone number dialing sequence was a "valid" sequence (i.e., one that begins with a "1" or a "011" sequence) by first routing any excluded numbers (i.e., numbers beginning with "10" or "1700" or "1800" or "1900" or "1888" or numbers on a list of local area codes or numbers not beginning with "1," "011" or "*") outside of the system of the present invention for dialing under the default carrier code.

Emphasis added.

In fact, this distinction can be seen in even greater detail where the claim actually recites that the stored number is a toll-free number (e.g., see claims 2 and 3). This failure of the '877 patent results in not achieving the result described in the previous response, i.e., routing additional traffic over the second network now that an accessible number is known for it.

Since the '877 patent excluded processing of 700, 800, 888 and 900 numbers, it is clear that the '877 patent did not even appreciate the problem being solved by the present invention. As a result, one of ordinary skill in the art would not have been motivated to modify the teachings of the '877 patent to arrive at the claimed invention. Accordingly, claim 1 is not rendered obvious by the combination of

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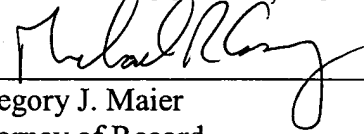
Reply to Office Action of February 3, 2004

applied references since the same positively recited limitation is missing from both applied references. Likewise, since all other rejections have been based on the rejection of claim 1, those rejections too should be withdrawn.

Consequently, in view of the present amendment and in light of the above discussions, the outstanding grounds for rejection are believed to have been overcome and in condition for allowance. An early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Customer Number

22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/03)

Michael R. Casey, Ph.D.
Registration No. 40,294